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Thelma. Spencer

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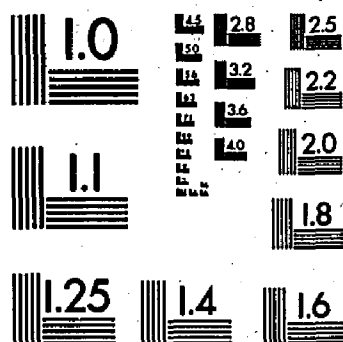
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THE EFFECT OF AN ADLERIAN-BASED GROUP COUNSELING/EDUCATION
PROGRAM ON THE SELF CONCEPT, LOCUS OF CONTROL, AND FAMILY
ENVIRONMENT OF ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

The College of William and Mary in Virginia

Ed.D. 1986

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A Dissertation
Presented to the
Faculty of the School of Education
College of William and Mary

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
Thelma W. Spencer
August, 1986

THE EFFECT OF AN ADLERIAN-BASED GROUP COUNSELING/EDUCATION
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by

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Chairman, Doctoral Committee

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to Edgar G. Waggoner, whose unwavering support and confidence in my ability consistently motivated me to continue. Not only is he a model of hard work and achievement, but also my best friend.

Still...

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FAMILY ENVIRONMENT OF ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Justification for the study

Although the study of adolescence is dated to the work of G. Stanley Hall (1904, 1916), the period of adolescence is an artifact of the urban-industrial society. With the development of large industrialized areas and the exodus to the cities for employment, three major movements developed which specified adolescence as a concrete entity. These movements were compulsory education, child labor legislation, and special legal procedures for juveniles (Bakan, 1971). Therefore, adolescence became a special time resulting from legal development and industrialization.

Jensen (1985) divides definitions of adolescence into three categories: biological, psychological, and sociological. The biological definition refers to that time when one first becomes capable of reproducing, the psychological definition to that time when certain developmental tasks take place along with the cognitive development of the individual, and the sociological as the transitional period between the dependent state of childhood

and the independent state of adulthood. While each definition has merit, the vagueness of the psychological and sociological viewpoints leads most researchers to define adolescence chronologically as in legal criteria. Therefore, adolescence is generally recognized as the period between eleven and nineteen.

The construct of adolescent identity formation has greatly interested researchers. The period has been referred to as a time of storm and stress and, with Erikson's Childhood and Society (1950,1963), became known as the time when the major event was an "identity crisis." Freud (1953) also believed adolescence was a time of change and crisis and Anna Freud (1969) further elaborated on this theme.

Not all researchers agree with Erikson and Freud and many do not support the postulate that all adolescents experience psychological upheaval (e.g. Coles, 1976; Offer and Offer, 1969; Offer and Offer, 1974). Baumrind (1980) believes adolescence is a luxury of elite because their social and personal background frees them from responsibilities.

Nevertheless, in our culture, adolescence is accepted

as a time of physiological and psychological changes, a time for identity searching, and a time of preparation for a mature social role (Burke & Weir, 1978). Throughout this period, peer and family relationships appear to have the most impact on development (Forisha-Kovach, 1984; Burke & Weir, 1978) and provide the basis for support as the adolescent strives for greater autonomy and independence.

Compulsory education laws have dictated that students remain in school until the age of seventeen unless released from school by the court system. These laws have prompted educators and legislators to establish programs to meet the diverse needs of special populations of students (e.g. learning disabled, physically handicapped, underachievers, gifted). The alternative high school is but one of the outcomes of this need.

The alternative school movement in the United States grew out of the humanism of the sixties. This period was not only a time of protest, but also a time of sociopolitical optimism and high expectations for education. Billions of dollars were available through private and governmental sources for new methods and innovations for education abounded. President Johnson's war on poverty was based on education of the poor; thus, programs such as Head

Start were begun. At the same time, monies were available for the establishment of alternatives for other populations and these programs became the foundation of the alternative high school movement.

Point Option, an alternative high school in Newport News, Va., was established in 1974 with a grant from the federal government. The target population was, and remains, able underachievers. Martin, Marx & Martin (1980) state underachievers are characterized by "general apathy, depression, absenteeism, tardiness, irresponsibility, and unreliability...present severe problems to school teachers, counselors, and administrators who often feel impotent in their interactions with them (p. 109). The goal of the program is to develop a learning environment and counseling strategies that will encourage students who are not being successful in the traditional high school in a manner that will lead to their receiving a high school diploma.

Before being accepted to Point Option, students are tested and must be of at least average academic ability. They must also be capable of satisfactory academic performance. However, approximately one-third of the 120 students fail more than eighty percent of the classes they are taking during a nine week marking period. Many display

chronic absenteeism or tardiness, depression, irresponsibility, unreliability, drug and/or alcohol involvement, and problems with their peers and families.

The most important rationale for this study was to find a counseling strategy that would produce the necessary changes in behavior to allow the students to complete high school as well as improve their peer and family relationships.

Statement of the problem

What will the effects of an Adlerian approach to group counseling/education be on the self concept, locus of control, and family relationships of alternative high school students, with and without parent participation? This study sought to determine the effects of an Adlerian based group education program (PREP) on the self concept, locus of control, and family relationships of alternative high school students. In addition, the study sought to determine the impact of concurrent parent participation in the STEP-TEEN program, an Adlerian based parent education program, on the self concept, locus of control, and family relationships of their children. Students participating in the experimental groups were compared with a no treatment control group.

Theoretical rationale

This study was an attempt to find a counseling strategy that would improve the self concept, locus of control, and family relationships of underachieving alternative high school students. Such students might be considered by some theorists to be "discouraged" and using negative behavior as a means of finding their place in the world. These concepts were first introduced by Alfred Adler.

Mosak and Dreikers in Corsini (1973), outline the basic concepts of Adlerian psychology. Those that have special significance for educators include:

1. All behavior occurs in a social context, so we cannot be studied in isolation.
2. Adlerian psychology rejects reductionism in favor of holism, studying the whole person and how one moves through life.
3. Individual psychology is an interpersonal psychology studying how individuals interact with each other.

4. The individual uses both the conscious and the unconscious to further one's goals.

5. The understanding of the individual requires the understanding of the cognitive organization, the life style. Mosak (1954) divided life-style convictions into four groups:

a. The self-concept - the convictions I have about who I am.

b. The self ideal - the convictions of what I should be or am obliged to be in order to have a place.

c. The "Weltbild" or "picture of the world" -- the convictions about the not self and what the world demands of me.

d. The ethical convictions - the personal right-wrong code.

6. The life-style is not synonymous with the behavioral organization of the individual.

7. The social embeddedness of a person in the phenomenal field demands that we study one's movement within the field. People are becoming, moving toward self selected goals rather than being pushed from behind due to heredity and environment.

8. Moving through life, the individual is confronted with alternatives -one chooses the goal one wishes to pursue.

9. The freedom to choose gives value and meaning to life. The greatest value for the Adlerian is social interest.

10. Process, rather than diagnosis, is the focus.

11. Life presents challenges in the form of life tasks. These were originally society, work, and sex, but later expanded to include love, friendship, search for meaning, and getting along with oneself.

An awareness of the social significance of behavior

allows counselors and educators to look at peer groupings and teacher/student relationships to help get a better understanding of adolescent behavior.

Dreikurs (1948) has been in the forefront of applying Adlerian principles to child behavior. The Adlerian theory of personality maintains that for the growing child the need to belong is paramount. The family is the primary social group for the child and in this group the child searches for significance, for a place. This position, or psychological place, is of supreme importance. The idea of position is not to be confused with birth-order (the concept that there is a one-to-one correspondance between place in family and personality traits) but rather one's psychological position in the family constellation.

From these concepts, Dreikurs, who founded the Alfred Adler Institute in Chicago, formulated four goals of children's misbehavior. These are attention getting, power seeking, revenge taking, and declaring deficiency or defeat. These goals are not long range but immediate and are used to explain "misbehavior" rather than all child behavior. These goals have provided an invaluable tool for parents and teachers to aid in understanding and dealing with misbehavior.

Dreikurs' early works, Psychology in the Classroom, A Manual for Teachers (1957, 1968), and Maintaining Sanity in the Classroom - Illustrated Teaching Techniques (1971), provided concrete techniques for educators. Dreikurs maintains that the maladjusted or behavioral problem child is not "sick" - but is "discouraged" and has created a cognitive map that will assist him/her in coping with the world. Once the goals are discovered, they can be challenged and the child can be helped to establish new goals that produce more appropriate behavior.

The social orientation of Individual Psychology has inevitably led to the Adlerian's interest in group methods. Dreikurs (1959) is credited with the first use of group psychotherapy in private practice. He discriminates between psychotherapy and counseling by stating that psychotherapy has as its goal the change of life-style, whereas counseling aims to change behavior within the existing lifestyle.

Dinkmeyer, a student of Dreikurs, has further expanded the techniques first espoused by his teacher in the educational setting. Some of his early works include Group Counseling (1971) with Muro and Developmental Counseling and Guidance: A Comprehensive School Approach (1970) with Caldwell.

An advocate of Adlerian group counseling, Dinkmeyer (1979) believes the unique nature of the interpersonal relationships that develop within the group makes it possible for the participants to become aware of their mistaken and self-defeating beliefs and actions and to feel encouraged to change them. Adolescents make better and more rapid progress in group counseling since they develop most of their difficulties in group interactions. These difficulties include becoming the family symptom bearer, drug use, delinquency, sexual experimentation, school-related problems, and parental problems as the adolescent searches for autonomy.

The group process focuses on the beliefs, attitudes, values, feelings, purposes, and behavior of the members. By helping participants establish personal goals and by challenging their perceptions, the group enables them the opportunity to develop behaviors to cope more effectively with the tasks of life.

After developing very successful parent programs Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (1976) and Systematic Training for Effective Parenting of Teens (1983), and a teacher education program, Systematic Training for Effective Teaching (1980), Dinkmeyer has developed with his

colleagues a group perparenting counseling/education program for adolescents (PREP, 1985). He believes that in working with adolescents, it is helpful to keep in mind the life task areas of work, friendship, love, getting along with oneself, search for meaning, leisure and recreation, and parenting. The author believes adolescents are hard to counsel due to the variety of values of a given young person on the part of his parents, teachers, peers, and larger community. In our culture, it is difficult for adolescents to find ways of contributing and, in spite of their apparent isolation from the adult community, most want to know what adults think, particularly those close to them and especially parents. These issues are addressed in his and his colleagues recent education/counseling program, which is the focus of this study.

Definition of terms

Alternative education. A "program of education which stresses the uniqueness of the individual while members work together toward a true sense of community. The program attempts to serve students whose characteristics include high rates of absenteeism, poor motivation, lack of discipline, tardiness, and drug usage" (DeSalvo, 1982, p. 10).

Alternative high school. A high school or high school program that exists in addition to the standard or traditional school programs, usually to serve students who find regular high schools inadequate to their needs.

Locus of control. A set of learned generalized expectancies about how reinforcement is obtained (Phares, 1978). A person whose locus of control is Internal expects to be able to control his or her own fate. A person whose locus of control is External believes that what happens is the result of luck or the behavior of more powerful people in the environment.

Self concept. Defined by Carl Rogers as an aggregate of values, attitudes, and judgements which an individual holds regarding his or her appearance, behavior, skills, and general worth as a person (Byrne & Kelly, 1982).

Underachievers. Students who consistently function below their expected levels of scholastic performance. For the purposes of this study, such students can further be defined as possessing at least average academic potential as measured by standardized SRA and Gates-McGinite reading test scores.

Research hypotheses

Research question.

What will the effects of an Adlerian approach to group counseling/education be on the self concept, locus of control, and family relationships of alternative high school students, with and without parent participation?

Specific hypotheses

1. Students receiving Adlerian counseling will show improvement in their total self concept score measured by the Tennessee Self Concept Scale, as compared to students not receiving counseling.
2. Students participating in the two treatment groups will improve their scores in cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence, and control scores measured by the Family Environment Scale, as compared to students not receiving counseling.
3. Students participating in the two treatment groups will show movement toward higher internality in locus of control measured by the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control

Scale, as compared to students not receiving counseling.

4. Students whose parents are concurrently in an Adlerian parent education group will have the most significant improvement on all three constructs.

Sample and data-gathering procedures

The purpose of the proposed study was to assess and compare the effects of an Adlerian education approach with adolescents whose parents are in an Adlerian parent education group with those adolescents whose parents are not.

The location for this study was Point Option Project, an open alternative high school in Newport News, Virginia. Point Option has approximately 120 students in grades nine through twelve. Students' ages range from fourteen to twenty. Subjects were Point Option students who requested to take the PREP course for elective credit.

Volunteer subjects were randomly assigned to one of three groups: two PREP treatment groups and one no treatment control group. Treatment groups were limited to twelve students to fall within the acceptable range of group

size for effective counseling outcomes (Valom, 1975). From past experience at Point Option, it was estimated that one or two students would leave school or drop from each of the treatment groups.

Parents of students in the two treatment groups were notified and offered the opportunity of participating in the STEP-TEEN program, an Adlerian based education program for the parents of teens. Parents of twelve of the students elected to participate. Their children became PREP group 1.

PREP groups met three times a week during the nine week marking period, for approximately 50 minutes each session. The STEP-TEEN parent group met once a week for eight weeks, for approximately one and one-half to two hours.

Fitts' (1965) Tennessee Self Concept Scale, Nowicki-Strickland's (1973) Locus of Control Scale for Children, and Moos' (1981) Family Environment Scale-Form R were administered pre- and post treatment to the treatment and control groups.

Limitations

Among the factors which limit the generality of the

conclusions which can be drawn from the study is the fact that students at Point Option may not be said to be truly representative of underachieving high school students in Newport News. Many underachievers do not choose to leave the traditional high school program in spite of lack of success, and many drop out of high school without trying an alternative program. In addition, Point Option does not accurately reflect the racial composition of the high school population in Newport News. That population is approximately 60 percent white while the Point Option population is approximately 92 percent white.

A further limitation to the generalizability of the findings is the fact that nearly all experimental educational research, including this study, must be conducted with volunteer subjects (Borg & Gall, 1983). Therefore, the conclusions of this study are applicable only to Point Option students and potentially alternative high school students with similar characteristics.

Overview

In Chapter 2, Adlerian parent education programs are discussed and relevant research on the effectiveness of these programs is presented. Literature on the self

concept, locus of control, and family relationships of adolescents is also presented. The effectiveness of alternative schools is examined and a profile of the alternative school student is suggested. The methodology of the study, including specific research hypotheses and research design, are presented in Chapter 3. In chapter 4, the data collected during the study are presented and analyzed. The study is summarized and conclusions are made in Chapter 5. Implications for further research are also presented in the final chapter.

CHAPTER 2

Summary of rationale and relationship to problem

The review of the historical and theoretical development gives evidence of a longstanding interest in the principles of Adlerian psychology and their application to the educational setting. Dinkmeyer, Pew, and Dinkmeyer (1979) describe counseling of children, adolescents and college students, as well as discuss group counseling techniques, from an Adlerian perspective. Teacher and parent educational centers have also been established.

Dinkmeyer et al. (1979) relate the Adlerian concept of striving for significance in the adolescent as striving for uniqueness which frequently leads to conflict with adults. Defiance of norms and unconventional behavior are two of the many ways adolescents express rejection of adult values in their quest for personal autonomy. Most of the ways of behaving that are eventually accepted by the person reflect the individual's current concept of self.

Throughout the development of specific programs and techniques for applying Adlerian principles in the parental and educational setting, Dinkmeyer and his colleagues

focused upon elementary school students and parents (DUSO, 1982; STEP, 1976). The authors then expanded their programs to encompass the parents of teens (STEP-TEEN, 1983). A logical extension of these program developments has been the creation of a program for adolescents (PREP, 1985) that incorporates the basic Adlerian philosophy. Some key points include:

1. Your lifestyle is based on your beliefs about how you can belong.
2. Behavior and emotions serve a purpose. They show what a person really believes.
3. Your emotions can work for or against you.
4. People choose their own feelings. They can change feelings by changing beliefs.
5. All behavior -- both positive and negative -- is a matter of choice.
6. The four basic goals of negative behavior are attention, power, revenge, and display of

inadequacy. Three additional goals that occur in the teen years are excitement, peer acceptance, and superiority.

7. People who use negative behavior are discouraged.

Testing this approach in an alternative high school setting yields needed information both in regard to the effectiveness of using a structured Adlerian approach with adolescents in general and underachievers specifically.

Summary of Relevant Research

Adlerian-based education programs

Adlerian parent education was first introduced by Alfred Adler in post-World War I Vienna. The Austrian Republic had set as a goal the reformation of the public school system and this allowed Adler the opportunity to establish the first child guidance clinic. In this clinic, parents, teachers and interested lay persons discussed cases of children with problems, and the parents and teachers were instructed in methods of working with them. By 1930 there were thirty-two such clinics, all of which were connected to

the schools. Adler believed that education was the most efficient method for preventing emotional disturbance (Croake,1983).

Rudolph Dreikurs, M.D., was a student and colleague of Adler in Vienna and is credited with being the leading proponent of Adlerian methods in the United States from 1937 until his death in 1972. All of the present Adlerian education programs are based upon the teachings of Alfred Adler as interpreted by Rudolph Dreikurs.

Dreikurs (1950) formulated four goals of misbehavior applicable to the preadolescent child which are incorporated into all of the parent education programs. He referred to children's misbehavior as "goals" because the misbehavior serves an immediate purpose. The goals are attention-getting, power, power with revenge, and display of inadequacy.

Croake (1983) summarizes some of the basic tenets of Dreikurs's position as follows. Adlerian counseling and parent education rely heavily on diagnosing the goal of misbehavior and taking appropriate action. Upon gaining an understanding of the purpose of the child's behavior, which is largely unconscious, both parent and child are in a

position to take corrective action. In Adlerian terms, it is assumed that the child is "discouraged" and using the misbehavior because establishing a place of significance when behaving in an appropriate manner appears impossible.

Adlerian parent education with adolescents requires a different approach than that used with parents of preadolescents. The four goals of misbehavior are not as applicable to teens since they are attempting to find their places within the peer group. The peers are the primary medium, rather than the family, so misbehavior usually reflects attempts to have status within adolescent culture rather than attempting to engage the parents. Natural consequences are the most effective outcomes of misbehavior, and must be consistent, with as little parental involvement as possible.

Croake continues by discussing research on Adlerian parent education programs and states that most of the research has come from theses or dissertations due to the Adlerian practitioner's interest in "spreading the word" as opposed to evaluating the effectiveness of the methods. However, the trend is changing and there is at present a reasonable amount of literature assessing the outcomes of parent education programs (e.g. Bauer, 1978; Taylor &

Hoedt, 1974).

Research on the effectiveness of Adlerian parent education groups

The effects of Adlerian-based parent training programs on children's behavior have generally been disappointing (Bauer, 1978; Clarkson, 1980; Dobson, 1979; Kozlowski, 1978; Meredith & Benninger, 1979). The majority of parent-training programs work with the parents as the change agents with no concurrent training for the children.

To determine the effect of simultaneous parent-child group intervention, Wantz and Recoe (1984) conducted a single-group pretest-posttest design study using the STEP program (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1976) with volunteer parents and the revised Developing Understanding of Self and Others (DUSO) (Dinkmeyer & Dinkmeyer, 1982) with their children. Using the Adlerian Parental Assessment of Child Behavior Scale (McKay, 1976) pre- and posttest as their measurement instrument, a two group dependent t test indicated that the children's behavior, as assessed by the parents, improved significantly, although they had no control group.

Taylor and Hoedt (1974) compared group counseling with

significant adults (parents or teachers) to group counseling with elementary school children in reducing classroom behavior problems among 372 children of average socio-economic backgrounds. Analysis of variance results following a ten-week treatment program indicated that the indirect approach (Adlerian group counseling with significant adults) was more effective in reducing behavior problems than the direct approach (eclectic group counseling with children), regardless of grade.

Using the more recent STEP-Teen program (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1983), Reinhardt (1984) performed an experimental study to determine the effects of the program on the behavior of first offender juvenile delinquents. Changes in parental attitudes about child-rearing and parental reports of maladaptive behavior (including numbers, frequency, and impact) were measured and compared between parents in a treatment group and parents in a control group. Results indicated that the parents in the treatment group improved significantly in some attitudes but not others. All measures of perceptions of adolescent behavior improved significantly in the treatment group but not in the control group.

Critique

The studies cited above, as with most Adlerian parent education programs, have been conducted largely with middle class white mothers. The study by Reinhardt (1984) is a move toward assessing the application to other populations but the applicability of Adlerian parent education for nonmiddle class white parents has not yet been established. Also, parent education programs have been directed mainly to preadolescent children with only the attitudes of the parents being measured. Research with adolescents and measurement of their attitudes would add to the knowledge of the value of these programs. Longitudinal studies to measure both attitudes and behaviors of parents and their children are also needed.

The effect of group counseling on the self concept of adolescents

Self concept can be seen as the collected sum of the individual's beliefs, perceptions, cognitions, and values about himself/ herself. It is impacted by the behavior of others toward self and the social environment in which one lives. It is a fluid and non-static conceptualization which often escapes precise definition. It is generally recognized as crucial in the development of a healthy personality structure (Offer & Sabshin, 1966).

Using a peer counseling format combined with the Reality Therapy problem-solving model, Talbert (1984) conducted an experimental study with 390 high school students to measure the effectiveness of participation in such a group on the self concept of the participants. Two control and one experimental group were utilized. Results from pre- and posttesting scores on the Tennessee Self Concept Scale supported the hypothesis that those students who did receive peer counseling training did positively change their self concepts.

Baker (1984) was interested in the effect of group counseling on the self concept of early adolescent remedial reading students. The three groups consisted of one which met every day for six weeks for group counseling in addition to the remedial reading classes, one which attended only remedial reading classes every day for the six weeks, and one which attended regular reading classes every day although they qualified for remedial reading classes. A Solomon four design was used with pre- and posttest differences measured by the Piers-Harris Self Concept Scale for Children and the reading section of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. The author found that group counseling did not effect the self concept of the students but that there was a significant difference in the reported happiness and

satisfaction factor of self concept for the students who were in remedial reading classes.

Logan, Jepsen, and Eldridge (1977) evaluated a high school psychological education program which emphasized a values clarification approach. The study involved forty-eight juniors, equally divided into experimental and control groups. Pre- and posttest scores were taken on Rotter's Internal- External Locus of Control Scale and the Adjective Checklist. Posttest scores were obtained from the Self-Esteem Scale. The results obtained showed that the experimental group moved toward a stronger belief in internal control on the I-E posttest but there was no significant difference on the Adjective Check List Self Esteem Scale.

Bouichillon (1970) studied the effects of client-centered counseling, group centered counseling, individual and social reinforcement, and group verbal and social reinforcement on thirty-five students enrolled in a study skills program. The students met weekly for one semester. He found that group counseling was the most effective in terms of changing the expressed self concept of the students in a positive manner and that both group counseling approaches showed the greatest gains in mean

terms, although the differences were small.

Using the Tennessee Self Concept Scale to determine the effectiveness of group counseling on the self concept of absentee prone high school students, Cordell (1973) found positive significant changes in the self concept and noted that group counseling was equally effective with males and females.

Lathey (1971) conducted a study to compare the effectiveness of marathon group counseling and traditional group counseling in producing changes in the self-actualization, self concept, and level of dogmatism of sixty undergraduate students. Using the Personal Orientation Inventory, the Tennessee Self Concept Scale, and the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale, he found traditional group counseling the most effective in promoting positive change.

Success counseling was a group method used by Washington (1977) to try and enhance the self concept of a group of urban youth. Success counseling is based on the notion that success plays a major role in determining a person's self concept and is viewed as a prevention approach that emphasizes strengths rather than weaknesses. The author states that although success counseling as a group

counseling technique "is no panacea for the problems of economically disadvantaged urban adolescents" (p. 409), it can help enhance their self concept and sense of control.

Critique

The literature reviewed for this study demonstrates but a small sample of the variety of methods practiced under the group counseling umbrella and the variations in group size, length and duration of counseling, and research designs. In some studies (Bouchillon, 1970; Cordell, 1973; Lathey, 1971) no control group was utilized. In another (Washington, 1977), measurements were not cited and yet in others (Cordell, 1973; Talbert, 1984) only one instrument was utilized.

According to Gazda and Larsen (1970), most group counseling takes place in an educational setting with an almost equal emphasis on underachievers and behavior problem groups. The need for further systematic research on methods that may prove successful with adolescents is evidenced by the inconsistency of the outcomes of present studies. By using an Adlerian format in the PREP program (Dinkmeyer et al., 1985), this study will measure the effectiveness of a structured program on the self concept of labeled

underachievers. The main advantage of such a program is that it may easily be replicated by other researchers in further studies.

Locus of control

Locus of control as a construct refers to a person's perceived contingency relationships between his or her actions and their outcomes (Coleman et al., 1966). Rotter's (1966) studies support the hypothesis that a person who has a strong belief that one can control his/her own destiny is likely to: (a) be more attentive to those aspects of the environment which might provide him with information useful for future behavior; (b) take steps to improve the environmental condition; (c) place greater value on skill or achievement; (d) be resistive to influence attempts. A person with an external locus of control orientation believes that events are determined by factors over which he or she has little or no control, such as fate, luck, chance, or powerful others.

A high external locus of control orientation is associated with poor academic performance (Lefcourt, 1976) and social adjustment problems (Bryan & Bryan, 1977). Chandler (1975) cited a number of studies that all found a

disproportionately high number of children with external locus of control as lower in academic achievement. Because this behavior is established in childhood and related to parental behavior (Crandall, Katkovsky & Crandall, 1965), parental participation in a group designed to improve democratic interaction between parent and child should shift the locus of control toward a more internal orientation and help the child be more successful academically. With the increase in parent education groups, both parents and professionals have begun to realize that successful family interactions do not necessarily occur naturally (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1976).

Friedberg (1982) administered the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale for Children and the Piers-Harris Children's Self Concept Scale to a group of twenty-four eleven to seventeen-year-old status offenders. Results supported the hypothesis of a negative correlation between a high self concept and an external locus of control. Ollendik, Elliott, and Matson (1980) also found that identified delinquents were more externally oriented. After administering the Nowicki-Strickland to a group of ninety juvenile delinquents in a behavior modification treatment program, they found internally oriented subjects committed fewer offenses and evidenced lower recidivism rates than did

externally oriented subjects.

Not all research supports the belief that locus of control is directly related to achievement. Brown (1980) surveyed fifty-eight fifteen-year-olds and compared their scores with intelligence test scores and academic achievement. Using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale for Children, and the Wide Range Achievement Test, the author found a significant relationship between intelligence and locus of control but no significant relationship between academic achievement and locus of control.

Williams, Omigo, and Abrams (1984) conducted a research study to determine the effects of STEP on parental attitudes and locus of control of their learning disabled children. The participants consisted of thirty-eight volunteer parents (32 mothers, 6 fathers) and their children (28 boys, 10 girls) from a white, middle-to-upper class suburban neighborhood. The children were identified as learning disabled by their school district. The Parent Attitude Survey (PAS) and the Locus of Control Inventory for Three Achievement Domains (LOCITAD) were administered pre- and post-treatment to an experimental and control group, each consisting of nineteen parent-child pairs. The parents

completed the PAS and their children the LOCITAD. The treatment group participated in the STEP program for nine consecutive weeks, meeting approximately two hours per session. The MANOVA results indicated that experimental group parents were significantly different from the control group parents; they were more accepting and trusting after participation in the STEP program. They also perceived their own behavior as more of a causative factor in their children's behavior. The LOCITAD results indicated that the experimental LD children were more internal in the success social, success physical, failure intellectual, and failure physical domains. This study provides some evidence that participation in a parent group can produce positive results both for parents and for their LD children.

Critique

Studies concerned with locus of control have generally been limited to measuring the I-E of a specific population such as underachievers, delinquents, maladjusted, and gifted, or specific personality variables such as self concept, moral development or anxiety. Only the study conducted by Williams, Omigo, and Abrams (1984) addressed the influence of a parent education program on the locus of control of their children, and this also was a special

population. More research is needed in assessing the effect of specific parenting programs on I-E change in children and this study adds to that need.

Family perceptions and relationships

Thoreau noted more than a hundred years ago that public opinion is a weak tyrant compared to one's own private opinion. That self concept is a good index of one's mental health has been noted by more recent researchers (Kappes, 1980; Kappes & Parrish, 1979) and the association between children's self concepts and their family structure and family perceptions has also been reported (Parrish & Taylor, 1979; Parrish & Dostal, 1980; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980).

Forman and Forman (1981) were interested in the relationship between family environment and adolescent personality factors. They administered the High School Personality Questionnaire (HSPQ) to eighty high school students and the Family Environment Scale (FES) to both students and their parents. Using a stepwise multiple regression analysis, the authors found that significant variance in child behavior is attributed to family social system functioning although no single family variable accounted for a major portion of the variance to the

exclusion of other factors. From the results, the authors conclude that the child behavior varies more with total system functioning as opposed to separate system factors.

Rabkin (1965) views the child's perceptions of the family as having a greater impact upon the child than the actual condition of these relations. Research by Van der Veen and others (Van der Veen & Novak, 1974; Novak & Van der Veen, 1970) has demonstrated that adolescents suffering from a variety of disorders have more negative perceptions of their families as compared to family perceptions of their non-disturbed siblings. Conger (1977) states that maladaptive family relations is the highest predictor of delinquent behavior among teenagers.

Tyerman and Humphrey (1983) hypothesized that adolescents referred to a psychiatric service would report more life stress and less family support than a matching control group. The forty-eight subjects were interviewed at home and administered the Cohesion dimension of the FES. ANOVA results yielded significantly more symptoms and significantly less family support in the referred subjects. Also using the FES, Fox (1983) found that seventeen socially maladjusted adolescents perceived their families as not highly supportive or concerned about each other's welfare.

The families scored relatively higher on the Conflict subscale.

The relationship between locus of control and family perceptions has also been investigated. Nowicki and Scheenwind (1982) administered the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale and the Family Environment Scale to 200 American and 164 German eighteen year olds. Thirty-six of the sixty-four relations between family environment and locus of control reached significance levels, regardless of culture. Internals showed greater family Cohesion and Expressiveness and lower Conflict than Externals. High scores on the Active-Recreation Orientation and Moral-Religious Emphasis scales were consistently related to internality.

Also using the Nowicki-Strickland, Topol and Regnikoff. (1982) compared thirty hospitalized suicidal adolescents with thirty-four hospitalized non-suicidal teenagers and thirty-five high school or college student controls. The subjects were also administered the Mooney Problem Check List, Family Concept Test, Hopelessness Scale, and Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. Significantly more peer problems differentiated the suicidals from the other two groups, while serious family problems

discriminated the three groups from each other. Suicidals experienced a greater degree of hopelessness and were significantly more External in locus of control than the control group.

Critique

The research on one's perceptions of family environment has been generally limited to assessing the relationship between self concept, or other personality factors such as maladjustment, and family structure. Most of the studies cited in this review have simply reported findings from measurements of specific populations and not an assessment of what specific methods might impact upon a family to produce positive change. This research has addressed the need for adding to the body of knowledge specific results from an experimental design that can be easily replicated by other researchers.

The purpose of alternative education and its effect on the self concept

Ringness (1975) explains the purpose of alternative education in this way:

We need to help children to understand

themselves better, to understand others, to determine how they feel, how they get that way, what alternatives they can muster, and to project the consequences of their feelings and points of view (p. xii).

The author states that the alternative educational setting helps the student develop as a person, rather than as a product of an imposed curriculum. He believes inadequate or maladaptive behavior can be corrected and new and more useful behavior encouraged. This humanistic viewpoint has as its goal helping the individual develop his potential, helping the individual to accept responsibility for his own actions, and helping the individual develop positive goals, attitudes and values.

Riordan (1972) states that the purpose of alternative education is to foster informal, unregimented, non-authoritarian, person-to-person human relationships which are shared decision making and respect for and acceptance of a wide range of personal and cultural backgrounds and value systems.

Although the purposes of alternative schools are noble, Smith (1978) cautions that alternative schools work well only for some students. He warns against looking once more for the singular, best way to teach. In addition, he

continues, many students do not respond well to the freedom offered them in non-traditional schools. They require the more rigid structure of the regular school which does not allow them as many opportunities to make errors in decision-making.

Several of the early alternative schools (ten years or more) are still in operation today, notably Cambridge Pilot School, Dallas Metropolitan Alternative School, St. Paul Open School, Project 12 in Tulsa, and Wichita High School Metro-Boulevard. Case (1981) surveyed these successful schools to determine what common characteristics they possessed that contributed to their survival. She found five basic factors: 1) the schools' programs continue to be attractive to parents and student; 2) the programs have a clear goal-focus (school leaders have not lost sight of their purpose); 3) recognition of the schools' legitimacy by important members of the educational community; 4) reliable sources of funding; and 5) positive school climates that foster the continued commitment of staff and students.

In an article summarizing the emergence of alternative schools, their varied populations and diverse problems, Barr (1981) discusses the future of alternative education in

America. Quoting Seymour Sarason, he wrote:

It's easier to start a new school than to change an existing one. By establishing innovative educational programs based on sound theory and research, as opposed to trying to change existing programs, school systems have developed alternative programs that have endured. This can continue (p. 571).

The author sees the eighties as the time that alternative schools have come of age and potentially the decade of diversification for public education.

Reddy et al. (1978) performed a study to measure four psychological correlates of student adjustment in the participants of an alternative high school program. The students volunteer to attend the alternative school, as opposed to being assigned there from traditional school. The authors used a multiple choice questionnaire, designed especially for the school, and the Tennessee Self Concept Scale as their measurement instruments. Based on individual profiles, the authors reported that students had a somewhat higher self-image than the norm and were found to be psychologically well adjusted as measured by school self-image, satisfaction, and involvement. The authors also discuss several other points relative to the study that merit attention.

First, detailed examination of the data indicate that the overall level of psychological adjustment was not homogenous, indicating that there were several subgroups in the school. They also questioned the students reasons for choosing the alternative school and found some chose it as an alternative while others chose it because of a lack of alternatives.

The authors also note the importance of staff in student adjustment. They cite other sources which support the hypothesis that most learning is accounted for by a combination of student ambition and staff committment and talent. Their final point was questioning what the students were adjusting to at the alternative school. They had no comparison groups, behavioral observations or longitudinal data and cite these as weaknesses in their study.

A study by Strathe and Hash (1979) reports that there was a significant change (.05) in the self concept of junior high students after one semester in an alternative school. The program consisted of a three hour per day enrollment in a self contained classroom with students in grades nine through twelve who had either dropped out or been expelled from traditional school. While finding significant change in the younger adolescents, the authors report little change

in self concept among older adolescents. The changes occurred only on the general self scale of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory. They suggest that only by identifying students early, and following them through the entire length of participation in the program, is it possible to get the long term impact of participation in an alternative program on the self concept of the participants.

Klumpe (1976) believes the variety of programs and inconsistent entrance requirements make it difficult to perform controlled studies using students in alternative programs. Weber (1976) also believes that evaluating alternative programs is difficult. Her premise is that in order to adequately evaluate an alternative program, the study must be comparative. The study must answer "Would these students progress just as well in another type of program?" Logistically, this format would not be feasible as it would require moving students from one program to another to evaluate their progress.

Critique

It is impossible to control for all of the variables when conducting a study outside of a laboratory. When working with students, the influence of home, friends, and

experience outside the school setting that may affect the student's performance must be considered. Therefore, the results of studies such as these must be accepted with some reservations. The study by Reddy et al. (1978) failed to have a control group but the authors cited this as one of their weaknesses. The Strathe and Hash (1979) study had no control group and only one measurement instrument.

The research on alternative schools is scarce and is needed to continue to justify their existence before local school boards. This study will add to the small body of research.

The alternative school student

The variety of alternative programs makes describing their populations an ominous, if not impossible, task. However, it seems the majority of high school programs are geared to a special population. Fritz (1975) characterizes the students as those who might drop out or prove disruptive in traditional school, or who, for a variety of reasons, find the regular school inadequate to meet their needs and who are interested in exploring opportunities in alternative schools.

It appears that one of the most common characteristics of alternative high school students is underachievement. Werheim and Hoffman (1974) performed a descriptive study of eight alternative schools in the Cleveland area. Seven of these programs were geared to underachievers or potential dropouts.

McCauley and Dornbush (1978) report that a desire for independence was the most frequent reason given by students for entering the three alternative schools they surveyed. The second most frequent reason involved dislike of the regular school either because of the perceived negative and authoritarian attitudes of teachers, or because of the student's poor academic achievement. Students in alternative schools perceived a major difference between the alternative school and the regular school to be the amount of individual attention they received. They felt that the amount of individual attention was not adequate in the regular school situation but was adequate in the alternative school. Both the students who chose to enter the alternative program and those who chose to remain in the regular school did not have feelings of independence, responsibility, and initiative, felt students played only a small part in the school's decision making, believed that parents were unlikely to participate in the school

decisions, and that relationships between students and teachers were rarely close. They agreed, also, that in regular school, teaching was seldom interesting and effective.

The urban alternative school is generally dominated by late adolescent minority students whose families are in the lower socioeconomic stratum. They are usually deficient in one or more of the basic skills and possess low impulse control. They may be dropouts or "drop-ins" -- students who attend school for socializing -- and, although they have considerable potential, feel alienated (Franklin, 1977).

This review demonstrates that alternative high school students have been studied in several ways. An advantage to having this population for an experimental study is their availability and commitment to their school. There is an obvious lack of experimental research with this population and this study provides needed work in that area.

Summary of research and relationship to the problem

The application of Adlerian principles in an educational setting has been of interest to educators for a number of years, beginning with the work of Rudolph Dreikurs

(1948) and further expanded by Dinkmeyer and his colleagues (1970, 1971, 1976, 1980, 1983, 1985). Their latest program is for adolescents and focuses on building family relationships, self-esteem, and accepting responsibility for one's behavior.

These constructs (self concept, locus of control, and family relationships) have been investigated by numerous researchers who have produced voluminous materials with varied results.

Although ample research has been conducted using various group methods and techniques for improving these constructs with a variety of populations, there is an obvious lack of experimental research with alternative high school students. This study has provided needed work in that area.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Population and selection of the sample

The purpose of the proposed study was to compare the effects of an Adlerian based counseling education program for adolescents (PREP) on the self concept, locus of control and family relationships of alternative high school students, with and without concurrent parent participation in an Adlerian parent education program (STEP-TEEN).

The location for the study was Point Option Project, an open alternative high school located in Newport News, Va. Point Option has approximately 120 students in grades nine through twelve, with ages ranging from fourteen to twenty.

Experimental subjects were Point Option students who chose to enroll in the PREP course for elective credit. The course was offered as part of the regular school curriculum and a letter grade was awarded. Due to the flexibility of the Point Option curriculum, courses not offered in the traditional high school are frequently offered at Point

Option for elective credit. Therefore, the inclusion of the PREP program did not appear to be a novelty.

From the volunteer group of forty-six students, subjects were assigned randomly to two treatment and one control group. Twelve students were assigned to each of the two treatment groups and fourteen students were assigned to the control group. Control group students selected another course from the curriculum for the third marking period which was the time frame for the research. These students then participated in the PREP class the fourth marking period.

Parents of the students in the two treatment groups were offered the opportunity to participate in the STEP-TEEN program, an Adlerian-based parent education program. Fourteen parents elected to participate.

Procedures

Data gathering

Experimental data was gathered from three instruments: Tennessee Self Concept Scale (Fitts, 1965), the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale for Children (Nowicki-

Strickland, 1973), and the Family Environment Scale-Form R (Moos, 1981). The instruments were administered pre- and post treatment to both the experimental and control groups.

Treatments

The PREP program was taught as a nine week unit of study, meeting three times a week for approximately 50 minutes each session. The course includes both individual reading and written work as well as a broad selection of group activities, discussions, role plays, and special exercises (See Appendix A).

Based in Adlerian psychology, the program is organized into nine units. These include:

Unit One: Understanding Self and Others

Unit Two: Communicating with Friends and Family

Unit Three: Solving Problems with Friends and Family

Unit Four: Encouragement

Unit Five: Dating Relationships

Unit Six: Marriage

Unit Seven: Becoming a Family

Unit Eight: Teaching Children Responsibility
and Discipline

Unit Nine: Special Challenges in Marriage

Adlerian psychology stresses that one's perceptions, or beliefs, about one's heredity or environment are more important than the actual factors of heredity and environment. Students begin the first unit by examining their own beliefs and lifestyles and how these attitudes affect their feelings and actions. They then explore ways of listening and speaking that will help build mutual respect with parents, siblings, and peers.

Students using negative behavior are considered by Adlerians to be "discouraged" and are behaving in the way they believe they can best belong. According to the authors (Dinkmeyer, et al., 1985) encouragement is the most important skill taught in PREP. Discouragement is based on the mistaken belief that one's importance depends upon the approval of others. Encouragement seeks to build self-esteem, which can counter this faulty belief.

PREP discusses dating issues and how basic communications skills can apply. The program then progresses to engagement and marriage, and ways to identify and resolve problems. Students then explore the decision to

start a family, children's behavior and misbehavior, and ways to encourage children's sense of responsibility and self-confidence. Divorce, single parenting, family violence, outside interference, adoption, and foster parenting are also examined.

It was anticipated that personal concerns and experiences would frequently become the focus of group discussions during the nine week period. Time for such discussions was provided for within the framework of the PREP outline.

The STEP-TEEN program for parents also has as its foundation Adlerian psychology (see Appendix G). The ten units include:

- Session 1: Understanding Your Teenager and Yourself
- Session 2: Personality Development
- Session 3: Emotions: A Source of Support or Frustration?
- Session 4: Encouragement: Building Your Teen's Self-Esteem
- Session 5: Communication: Listening
- Session 6: Communication: Expressing Your Feelings and Exploring Alternatives
- Session 7: Discipline: The Development of

Responsibility

Session 8: Discipline: Selecting the Appropriate Approach

Session 9: The Family Meeting

Session 10: Special Challenges

Parents learn that behavior is purposive and directed toward a goal, although neither they nor their teens may be aware of the purposes of their behavior. Their goals, however, are in line with their perceptions of how they can best belong. In addition to Dreikurs' original goals of misbehavior, three additional goals have been added for teens: excitement, peer acceptance, and superiority (Kelly & Sweeney, 1979). Instead of asking, "What did we do wrong?" parents learn to ask what is the payoff for their teen. Encouragement, as well as communication skills, is also taught.

The PREP groups were conducted by Point Option's school psychologist (see Appendix B). Her experience in teaching psychology, as well as conducting numerous groups for adolescents, gave her the necessary credentials and expertise to lead the PREP groups. Once the materials were received in November, 1985, we spent one hour a day for two school weeks examining them and discussing the specifics of how the groups would be conducted. The materials are very structured and the

teacher serves equally as a facilitator and disseminator of information. During the delivery of the course itself, this researcher intermittently observed the groups with no prior warning and consistently found the course outline being followed.

The STEP-TEEN parent group was led by a family counselor with Alternatives, Inc., in Newport News, Virginia. The counselor had led several STEP-TEEN groups prior to leading the Point Option parents' group, as well as having attended workshops conducted by the authors for certification (see Appendix C).

Ethical safeguards and considerations

All reasonable efforts were made to ensure that ethical safeguards were maintained throughout the study. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Research Committee of the Newport News Public Schools, the College of William and Mary Human Subjects Research Committee, the Director of of Point Option, the parents of students under the age of eighteen, and the students themselves. Since small group classes conducted with a counseling format are often a part of the Point Option curriculum, and are generally quite popular, no difficulty was encountered in achieving parental and

student involvement.

Instruments

Tennessee Self Concept Scale

This measure of self concept is composed of 100 self-descriptive statements which the subject rates on a scale of "1" to "5", with "1" representing that the statement is completely false and "5" that it is completely true. The instrument is available in both a Counseling and Clinical Form. The Counseling Form was utilized in this study.

The Counseling Form yields scores on fifteen scales: nine self esteem scores, three for variability of response, and one each for self-criticism, distribution, and time scores. The Total Positive Score is considered by Fitts to be "the most important single score on the Counseling Form" (p. 2). Following is a description as found in the manual:

Total P Score. This is the most important single score on the Counseling Form. It reflects the overall level of self-esteem. Persons with high scores tend to like themselves, feel that they are persons of value and worth, have confidence in themselves, and act accordingly. People with low scores are doubtful about their own worth; see themselves as undesirable; often feel anxious, depressed and unhappy; and have little faith or confidence in themselves (p. 2).

The TSCS is well validated and Buros (1972) reports numerous studies using the Scale. He comments that "many psychometric qualities of the scale meet the usual test construction standards that should exist in an instrument that hopes to receive wide usage" (p. 336). Interjudge agreement on its content and high correlations with other personality measures (MMPI, EPPS) were used in validating the instrument. Eta correlations of .46 and .56 were found with the I-E Locus of Control Scale. Bertinelli (1977) utilized a common factor analysis to extend the validation of the TSCS to adolescents. Product-moment correlation coefficients were calculated for 112 male and 125 female high school students. Results concur to some degree with Fitts' model of the construct of self concept, finding forty-six items that contribute to the factor structure.

The TSCS was normed on a sample of 626 persons varying in age, race, sex, and socioeconomic status. The test-retest reliability coefficients cluster in the high .80's.

Reed, Fitts, and Boehm (1980) found through a comprehensive sampling of the literature on the scale that the major use of the TSCS was in research. Fitts

(1965) has placed very few limitations on the types of subjects for whom the TSCS is appropriate (age, 12; reading level, sixth-grade), although McGuire and Tinsley (1981) have indicated the scale might not be appropriate for subjects under sixteen.

From a research point of view (Reed, Fitts, & Boehm, 1980) the TSCS has proven its utility as an instrument that distinguishes between groups, but studies pertaining to the validity of its structure (McGuire & Tinsley, 1981; Bentler, 1972) have provided mixed results.

The TSCS has been used at Point Option since its inception to assess the effect of the alternative school experience on the student's self concept. It was judged by the experimenter to be adequate in reliability and validity and appropriate for the designated population (see Appendix D).

Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale for Children

The Locus of Control Scale is a forty question measure that is answered yes or no. The items describe reinforcement situations across interpersonal and motivational areas such as affiliation, achievement, and

dependency.

The instrument was designed to assess an individual's generalized expectancies for internal as opposed to external reinforcement. Internal control is seen as the perception that events are the result of one's personal characteristics or behavior. External control is seen as the perception that positive or negative consequences following an individual's action is as much or more the result of fate, luck, or behavior of other powerful people, than of the actor's behavior. An externally oriented individual is more likely than an internally oriented individual to see future occurrence as unpredictable and uncontrollable.

Factor analytic studies (Wolf, Sklov, Monny, Hunter, & Berenson, 1982; Lindal & Venables, 1983) conducted with adolescents reveal factors that correspond with the factors identified by Nowicki. Belter and Brinkman (1981) used 182 sixteen to eighteen year old high school students to measure construct validity and results support the continued study and use of the Scale as a measure of locus of control. Test-retest reliability was .71 for tenth graders measured six weeks apart (Nowicki & Strickland, 1973).

According to Stipek and Weisz (1981), if students' personalities or motivation are more amenable to change than their ability, then achievement might be enhanced indirectly through educational practices that positively affect personality and motivational development. These authors found in their review of research that most published studies found a significant relationship between locus of control questionnaire scores and achievement and the few causal analyses that have been done point to locus of control as a cause of achievement rather than the reverse.

Since intervention studies do demonstrate that an educational environment that encourages students to take responsibility for their learning can positively influence learning, the construct of locus of control and the Nowicki-Strickland Scale were deemed appropriate for this population (see Appendix E).

Family Environment Scale

The Family Environment Scale (Moos, 1981, rev.) consists of ninety items answered true or false. The FES is comprised of ten subscales that measure the social-environmental characteristics of all types of

families. The subscales assess three underlying domains: the Relationship dimensions, the Personal Growth dimensions, and the Systems Maintenance dimensions. It is structured to enable the user to achieve a clear focus on a person's perceptions of the present family environment.

There are three forms of the FES: Real (Form R); Ideal (Form I); and Expectations (Form E). Form R was developed to measure each family member's perception of his or her family environment and was chosen to be used in this study. Several researchers have used the FES to study various forms of adolescent behavior including personality functioning (Forman & Forman, 1981), school related attitudes and behaviors (Jones & Hasselbrock, 1976; Draper, 1977) and gifted students (Tabachman, 1976).

The FES Form R subscales were collected for 1125 normal and 500 distressed families. The test-retest reliability on the subscales vary from a low of .68 to a high of .86 (Moos & Moos, 1981). Test-retest reliabilities were computed for the ten subscales at intervals of eight weeks, four months, and twelve months. The range for the twelve month group on six subscales was

between .76 and .89. The coefficients for the remaining four were .52, .63, .69, and .69. Profile stability correlations were also computed and the twelve month profile coefficient was .71.

Missing for the FES is a section on validity. Caldwell (1983) found only one reference to validity in the 77 studies cited in the manual. He goes on to report that external validity data are missing although the FES appears to have robust face validity. The author points out that although therapists and others who are involved in areas largely within the affective domain may prefer and defend conceptual-theoretical emphases rather than psychometric emphases, validity studies would lend credence to the instrument.

Given that the FES measures the perceptions of family members about their families and the reliability coefficients are adequate, the Scale was deemed appropriate for use in the present study (see Appendix F).

Design

The research design used in the present study is an

experimental design, the pretest-posttest control group design as described by Campbell and Stanley (1963). The experimental population (those students who requested to take the PREP course) were assigned randomly to one of two treatment groups and a control group. Each treatment group received identical information which was presented by the same instructor, a school psychologist with the Newport News Public Schools. The dependent variables were the Total P Score from the TSCS, the internal-external score from the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale for Children, and the cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence, and control scores from the FES. The design can be outlined in the following manner:

R	01	x	02	(PREP group 1)
R	03	x	04	(PREP group 2)
R	05	x	06	(no treatment control)

Parents of students in both treatment groups were offered the opportunity to participate in the STEP-TEEN program. Fourteen parents requested to participate in the group. Student assignment to groups was not dependent upon parent participation to control for leader bias. All reasonable efforts were made to prevent the PREP group leader from knowing which parents participated

in the STEP-TEEN group.

The pretest-posttest control group design controls for numerous threats to internal validity. History is controlled insofar as general historical events might be expected to influence all groups in a similar manner. Motivation, maturation, and testing were basically the same for experimental and control groups. The treatment periods were also the same. The random assignment to treatment groups controls for the effect of regression, as well as that of selection.

Specific hypotheses

The purpose of the proposed study was to assess the effects of an Adlerian education/counseling program for adolescents (PREP) on the self concept, locus of control, and family relationships of alternative high school students, with and without parent participation in an Adlerian based parent education group (STEP-TEEN).

Hypothesis 1. Students participating in the PREP group will not show an improvement in their Total P score as measured by the Tennessee Self Concept Scale when compared to students in a no treatment control group.

Hypothesis 2. Students participating in the PREP groups will not show movement toward internality as measured by the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale for Children when compared to a no treatment control group.

Hypothesis 3. Students participating in the PREP groups will not show improvement in their cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence, and control scores on the Family Environment Scale when compared with students in a no treatment control group.

Hypothesis 4. Students participating in the PREP groups will not show improvement on any of the measured constructs, regardless of participation or non-participation by their parents in a concurrent parent education group.

Statistical analysis

Statistical tests of significance were performed upon the data in null form by one-way analysis of covariance. Cook and Campbell (1979) suggest the analysis of covariance as a technique to increase the precision of the nonequivalent control group design. The

effects of the independent variable (the PREP program) were determined by a comparison between experimental and control groups. Pretest scores on the TSCS, Locus of Control Scale, and FES were used as covariates to control for inequalities in these areas. The 0.05 level of significance suggested by Cook and Campbell (1979, p. 40) as the standard for educational research, was selected for this study.

Summary of methodology

The purpose of the proposed study was to compare the effects of concurrent parent-child education, using an Adlerian based approach, on the self concept, locus of control, and family environments of participating alternative high school students. The location was Point Option Project, an open alternative high school in Newport News, Va. Point Option has approximately 120 students in grades nine through twelve with an age range of fourteen to twenty. Subjects were Point Option students who requested to take the PREP course for elective credit.

Students were randomly assigned to one of two treatment groups, with each group receiving identical

treatment. Fourteen parents of students in the treatment groups were in a concurrent parent education group (STEP-TEEN). Students met three times a week for the nine weeks, approximately 50 minutes each session. Parents met for eight weeks, approximately one and one-half to two hours each session.

Fitts' (1965) Tennessee Self Concept Scale, Nowicki and Strickland's (1973) Locus of Control Scale, and Moos' (1981) Family Environment Scale-Form R were administered pre- and post- treatment to the experimental and control groups. A one-way analysis of covariance was used to analyze the results.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine whether student participation in an Adlerian-based education program for teens (PREP) would produce an increase in self concept, locus of control, and family environment measurement scores, regardless of concurrent parental participation in an Adlerian-based parent education program (STEP-TEEN). Subjects were underachieving alternative high school students. Testing was administered pre- and posttest to two treatment and one control group. Treatment Group 1 (n=10) participated in the PREP program with their parents simultaneously in an evening STEP-TEEN parent group. Treatment Group 2 (n=13) participated in the PREP program with no concurrent parental participation in a parent education group and Group 3 (n=11) received no treatment and followed a regular class schedule. Tests were collected and scored, and the resultant data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS-X). The means and standard deviations for all of the pre- and posttest scores were also computed. The analyses of covariance were computed on all tests using the SPSS

Package, ANOVA.

This study addressed the following research question:

What will the effects of an Adlerian approach to group counseling/education be on the self concept, locus of control, and family relationships of alternative high school students, with and without parent participation?

Hypothesis 1

This hypothesis states that students participating in the two PREP groups will show no improvement in their Total P (Total Positive) score as measured by the Tennessee Self Concept Scale when compared to students in a no treatment control group.

The mean and standard deviation of pretest and posttest Total P scores were computed for both treatment groups and the control group. The results indicated a mean loss of .5 for experimental group 1, a mean gain of 8.85 for experimental group 2 and a mean gain of 8.63 for the control group (see Table 4.1). An analysis of covariance was performed on the difference in the pre- and posttest results using the pretest scores as a covariate to determine whether

significant differences ($p < .05$) in the Total Positive score existed as a result of the treatment. A significant difference was not indicated as a result of treatment when both experimental groups were compared with a no treatment control group (see Table 4.2). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was accepted.

Table 4.1

HYPOTHESIS 1 - MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST SCORES ON THE TOTAL POSITIVE SCORE OF THE TENNESSEE SELF CONCEPT SCALE

<u>TESTING SESSION</u>					
<u>Treatment</u>	<u>n</u>	<u>PRETEST</u>		<u>POSTTEST</u>	
		<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
PREP 1	10	322.70	36.88	322.20	44.32
PREP 2	13	324.23	26.44	333.08	25.14
Control	11	307.55	49.55	316.18	35.43

n= Students who completed both pretest and posttest measures.

TABLE 4.2

HYPOTHESIS 1 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE ON THE POSTTEST
SCORES OF THE TOTAL POSITIVE SCALE OF THE
TENNESSEE SELF CONCEPT SCALE

Source of Variation	sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
Covariate Pretest	1984.893	1	1984.893	6.257	0.018
Main Effects. Treatments (PREPs + Cntl)	2.481	1	2.481	0.008	0.930
Treatments (PREP 1 & 2)	496.220	1	496.220	1.856	0.188

Hypothesis 2

This hypothesis states that students participating in the PREP groups will not show movement toward internality as measured by the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale for Children when compared to a no treatment control group.

The mean and standard deviation was computed on both pretest and posttest scores for all three groups. The

results indicated a mean gain of 0.7 for treatment group 1, a mean loss of 3.38 for treatment group 2, and a mean loss of .09 for the control group (see Table 4.3). Movement toward internality on the Nowicki-Strickland is indicated by a change from a higher to lower score. An analysis of covariance was performed on the difference in the combined posttest scores to determine whether significant differences ($p < .05$) in locus of control scores existed as a result of the treatment. No significant difference was found (see Table 4.4) leading to an acceptance of Hypothesis 2. When analyzed independently, experimental group 2 displayed an F of 4.654 which was significant at the $p < .05$ level.

TABLE 4.3

HYPOTHESIS 2 - MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE
PRETEST AND POSTTEST SCORES ON THE NOWICKI-STRICKLAND
LOCUS OF CONTROL SCALE FOR CHILDREN

TESTING SESSION					
Treatment	n	PRETEST		POSTTEST	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
PREP 1	10	10.40	3.16	11.10	3.81
PREP 2	13	13.46	4.82	10.07	4.36
Control	11	13.18	4.64	13.09	5.07

TABLE 4.4

HYPOTHESIS 2 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE ON THE POSTTEST SCORES
OF THE NOWICKI-STRICKLAND LOCUS OF CONTROL
SCALE FOR CHILDREN

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
Covariate Pretest	18.416	1	18.416	1.248	0.273
Main Effects Treatments (PREPs + Cntl)	23.672	1	23.672	1.604	0.215
Treatments (PREP 1 & 2)	73.843	1	73.843	4.654	0.043*

* = significant at the .05 level

Hypothesis 3

This hypothesis states that students participating in the PREP groups will not show an improvement in their cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence and control scores on-Form R of the Family Environment Scale when compared with students in a no treatment control group.

The means and standard deviations were computed for the five subscales and the results have been tabulated in Tables 4.5-4.9. An analysis of the mean difference scores for treatment group 1 indicated a mean gain of .5 on the cohesion scale, a mean loss of 4.0 on the expressiveness scale, no mean gain or loss (score remained 54.6) on the conflict scale, a mean gain of 1.7 on the independence scale and a mean loss of 4.0 on the control scale. The results of an analysis of covariance of the differences in the pretest and posttest scores indicated no significant difference ($p < .05$) on any of the five subscales (see Tables 4.5 through 4.9).

Experimental group 2 showed a mean gain of .38 on the cohesion scale, a mean gain of 6.38 on the expressiveness scale, a mean loss of 3.92 on the conflict scale, a mean gain of .70 on the independence scale, and a mean gain of 3.85 on the control scale (see Tables 4.10 - 4.14). An analysis of covariance on the difference in the pretest and posttest results of the combined treatment groups did not show a significant difference ($p < .05$) when compared to a no treatment control group. Since no significant differences were found in either PREP group 1 or PREP group 2, Hypothesis 3 was accepted.

TABLE 4.5

HYPOTHESIS 3 - MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE
COHESION SUBSCALE OF THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

TESTING SESSION					
		PRETEST		POSTTEST	
Treatment	n	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
PREP 1	10	36.10	21.19	36.60	16.87
PREP 2	13	33.15	25.25	33.53	25.86
Control	11	34.54	19.52	34.27	20.42

TABLE 4.6

HYPOTHESIS 3 - MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE PRETEST
AND POSTTEST SCORES ON THE EXPRESSIVENESS SUBSCALE OF THE
FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

TESTING SESSION					
Treatment	n	PRETEST		POSTTEST	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
PREP 1	10	42.70	15.10	38.70	21.00
PREP 2	13	40.15	18.06	46.53	20.53
CONTROL	11	34.90	18.78	44.27	12.77

TABLE 4.7

HYPOTHESIS 3 - MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE PRETEST
AND POSTTEST SCORES OF THE CONFLICT SUBSCALE ON THE
FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

TESTING SESSION					
Treatment	n	PRETEST		POSTTEST	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
PREP 1	10	54.60	13.80	54.60	20.69
PREP2	13	61.53	15.47	57.61	17.12
Control	11	54.81	20.87	60.09	15.24

TABLE 4.8

HYPOTHESIS 3 - MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR THE PRETEST
AND POSTTEST SCORES OF THE INDEPENDENCE SUBSCALE OF THE
FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

TESTING SESSION					
Treatment	n	PRETEST		POSTTEST	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
PREP 1	10	48.20	16.50	49.90	9.90
PREP 2	13	44.30	18.30	45.00	18.60
Control	11	46.36	17.72	48.81	12.08

TABLE 4.9

HYPOTHESIS 3 - MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE PRETEST
AND POSTTEST SCORES ON THE CONTROL SUBSCALE OF THE
FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

TESTING SESSION					
Treatment	n	PRETEST		POSTTEST	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
PREP 1	10	55.40	11.08	51.40	12.98
PREP 2	13	46.38	19.29	50.23	14.03
Control	11	46.36	17.72	46.63	13.07

TABLE 4.10

HYPOTHESIS 3 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE ON THE POSTTEST SCORES
OF THE COHESION SUBSCALE OF THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
Covariate Pretest	173.818	1	173.818	0.815	0.374
Main Effects Treatments (PREPs + Cntl)	72.811	1	72.811	0.341	0.563
Treatments (PREP 1&2)	542.688	1	542.688	2.490	0.130

TABLE 4.11

HYPOTHESIS 3 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE ON THE POSTTEST SCORES
OF THE EXPRESSIVENESS SUBSCALE OF THE
FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
Covariate Pretest	79.761	1	79.761	0.680	0.416
Main Effects Treatments (PREPs + Cntl)	5.768	1	5.768	0.849	0.826
Treatments (PREP 1 & 2)	385.046	1	385.046	3.208	0.088

TABLE 4.12

HYPOTHESIS 3 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE ON THE POSTTEST SCORES
OF THE CONFLICT SUBSCALE OF THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
Covariate Pretest	285.323	1	285.323	2.960	0.095
Main Effects Treatments (PREPs + Cntl)	20.598	1	20.598	0.214	0.647
Treatments (PREP 1 & 2)	330.714	1	330.714	3.969	0.060

TABLE 4.13

HYPOTHESIS 3 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE ON THE POSTTEST SCORES
OF THE INDEPENDENCE SUBSCALE OF THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
Covariate Pretest	2241.285	1	2242.285	24.153	0.000
Main Effects Treatments (PREPs + Cntl)	2.378	1	2.378	0.026	0.874
Treatments (PREP 1 & 2)	0.275	1	0.275	0.002	0.962

TABLE 4.14

HYPOTHESIS 3 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE OF THE POSTTEST SCORES
OF THE CONTROL SUBSCALE OF THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
Covariate Pretest	177.990	1	177.990	2.613	0.116
Main Effects Treatments (PREPs + Cntl)	13.842	1	13.842	0.203	0.655
Treatments (PREP 1 & 2)	67.306	1	67.306	0.828	0.374

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 stated that students participating in the PREP program would not show improvement on any of the measured constructs, regardless of participation or non-participation by their parents in a concurrent parent education group.

To test this hypothesis, the means and standard

deviations for each treatment group were computed independently (see Tables 4.1, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9) on each of the measures. An analysis of covariance was then performed comparing each treatment group individually to the no treatment control group (See Tables 4.15 - 4.21). An analysis of the results of each of the seven scores did not show a significant difference ($p < .05$) in the results of treatment group 1 (with parental participation) when compared to the no treatment control group. Likewise, an analysis of the results of treatment group 2 (without parental participation) when compared to the no treatment control group showed no significant difference ($p < .05$) on any of the seven measurements (see Tables 4.15 - 4.21). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was accepted.

TABLE 4.15

HYPOTHESIS 4 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE OF THE POSTTEST
SCORES OF PREP GROUP 1 AND PREP GROUP 2 ON THE TOTAL
POSITIVE SCORE OF THE TENNESSEE SELF CONCEPT SCALE

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
PREP 1					
Main Effects	187.623	1	187.623	0.498	0.489
PREP 2					
Main Effects	183.205	1	183.205	0.731	0.402

TABLE 4.16

HYPOTHESIS 4 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE ON THE POSTTEST SCORES
OF PREP GROUP 1 AND PREP GROUP 2 ON THE NOWICKI-STRICKLAND
LOCUS OF CONTROL SCALE FOR CHILDREN

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
PREP 1					
Main Effects	1.406	1	1.406	0.196	0.663
PREP 2					
Main Effects	63.815	1	63.185	4.220	0.053

TABLE 4.17

HYPOTHESIS 4 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE OF THE POSTTEST SCORES
OF PREP GROUP 1 AND PREP GROUP 2 ON THE COHESION SUBSCALE OF
THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
PREP 1					
Main Effects	86.950	1	86.950	0.405	0.532
PREP 2					
Main Effects	358.685	1	358.865	2.284	0.146

TABLE 4.18

HYPOTHESIS 4 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE ON THE POSTTEST SCORES
OF PREP GROUP 1 AND PREP GROUP 2 ON THE EXPRESSIVENESS
SUBSCALE OF THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
PREP 1					
Main Effects	71.756	1	71.756	0.650	0.431
PREP 2					
Main Effects	117.952	1	117.952	1.178	0.290

TABLE 4.19

HYPOTHESIS 4 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE ON THE POSTTEST SCORES
OF PREP GROUP 1 AND PREP GROUP 2 ON THE CONFLICT SUBSCALE OF
THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
PREP 1 Main Effects	35.332	1	35.332	0.489	0.493
PREP 2 Main Effects	151.395	1	151.395	1.354	0.258

TABLE 4.20

HYPOTHESIS 4 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE ON THE POSTTEST SCORES
OF PREP GROUP 1 AND PREP GROUP 2 ON THE INDEPENDENCE
SUBSCALE OF THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
PREP 1 Main Effects	0.635	1	0.635	0.008	0.930
PREP 2 Main Effects	10.647	1	10.647	0.103	0.752

TABLE 4.21

HYPOTHESIS 4 - ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE OF THE POSTTEST SCORES OF PREP GROUP 1 AND PREP GROUP 2 ON THE CONTROL SUBSCALE OF THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig of F
PREP 1 Main Effects	5.514	1	5.514	0.082	0.778
PREP 2 Main Effects	53.520	1	53.520	0.922	0.348

Summary

Statistical analysis of experimental PREP group 1 and experimental PREP group 2 indicated that there is no evidence to support the effectiveness of the treatment as a factor in improving self concept, internality of locus of control, or family relationships, regardless of parent participation in a concurrent parent education group. Data indicated a mean gain for experimental group 2 on the Tennessee Self Concept Scale, a mean gain for experimental group 1 on the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale for

Children, mean gains on the cohesion and independence subscales of the Family Environment Scale for experimental group 1, and a mean gain on the cohesion, expressiveness, independence and control subscales of the Family Environment Scale for experimental group 2. An analysis of covariance on all of the scores ($p < .05$) did not indicate that the increases were a result of the effect of the experimental treatment.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Purpose. Adolescence, as a concrete entity, is an artifact of the urban-industrialized society brought about by compulsory education laws, child labor legislation, and legal procedures designed specifically for juveniles (Bakan, 1971). As a result, adolescent identity formation (Erikson, 1950; Freud, 1953) became of interest to researchers, as well as the impact of peer and family relationships on adolescent development (Forisha-Kovach, 1984; Burke & Weir, 1978).

Underachievement among capable adolescents has been a topic of interest to researchers (Martin, Marx, & Martin, 1980) and the alternative high school has been but one attempt in trying to meet the needs of this specific population. The purpose of this study was to determine whether an Adlerian based counseling/education experience in an alternative high school setting would produce an improvement in self concept, movement toward internality in locus of control, and an improvement in perceptions of

family environment regardless of concurrent parent participation in an Adlerian-based parent education group.

Review of the Literature. A review of the principles of Adlerian psychology and their application to the group setting provided the basis for this study. The work of Rudolph Dreikurs, M.D. (1950) provided the groundwork for Adlerian-based parent education programs and the work of Don Dinkmeyer, Ph.D. and his colleagues (1985) provided the format for an Adlerian-based group education program for teens.

A review of the research on the effectiveness of Adlerian parent education groups provided mixed results. Studies that worked with only parents as the change agents (Bauer, 1978; Clarkson, 1980; Dobson, 1979; Kozlowski, 1978; Meredith & Benninger, 1979) generally proved disappointing whereas studies which included both parents and their children (Wantz & Recoe, 1984; Dinkmeyer & Dinkmeyer, 1982; Taylor & Hoedt, 1974, Dinkmeyer & McKay, 1983; Reinhardt, 1984) provided results that showed an improvement in parental perception of child behavior.

A literature review on group counseling techniques with adolescents and experimental methods to improve internality

of locus of control and perceptions of family environments, provided sufficient evidence to warrant evaluating a new approach when working with adolescents to try and impact upon these constructs.

The literature on alternative high schools and their students supported the need to evaluate current counseling/teaching strategies with underachievers and to examine a technique that could potentially aid in enhancing self-esteem, movement toward internality in locus of control and improvement in family relationships to a degree that would enable students to remain in school and complete their high school diploma.

Methodology. The sample consisted of two treatment (n=23) and one control (n=11) group of students at Point Option Project, an alternative public high school in Newport News, Virginia. The groups were composed of students who requested a course in "Preparing for Marriage" (PREP) during the third marking period. Students were randomly assigned to two treatment and one control group with the parents of students in the treatment groups offered the opportunity to participate in a concurrent parent education program (STEP-TEEN). Fourteen parents chose to participate but only ten attended the eight sessions necessary for completion of

the course. The students whose parents completed the program became PREP group 1 and those students whose parents did not choose to attend became PREP group 2. A school psychologist with Newport News Public Schools led the PREP groups and a family counselor with Alternatives, Inc. led the parent education group. The control group (n=11) participated in the regular school curriculum during the third marking period, which was the time designated for the study, and then registered for the PREP course the fourth marking period. PREP classes met three times a week during the nine weeks for approximately 50 minutes each session. The parent group met one evening a week for eight weeks for approximately one and one-half to two hours.

Conclusions

A statistical analysis of covariance using the SPSS-X statistical package ANOVA yielded the following information on each hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Students in both treatment groups who received the PREP program did not show significant ($p < .05$) gains in self concept as measured by the Total Positive Score of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale when compared to a no treatment control group.

Hypothesis 2: There were no significant differences ($p < .05$) in movement toward internality in locus of control between the treatment and control groups.

Hypothesis 3. No significant differences ($p < .05$) were indicated by an analysis of covariance on the posttest scores of the cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, independence, and control subscales of Form R of the Family Environment Scale among the three groups.

Hypothesis 4: There was no significant difference between PREP group 1 and PREP group 2 when compared independently with a no treatment control group.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that participation in an Adlerian-based group/education counseling course for teens does not positively effect the self concept, locus of control or family relationships of underachieving alternative high school students, regardless of concurrent parent participation by their parents in an Adlerian-based parent education program.

Previous studies using Adlerian methods have assessed

only parental or other adult attitudes of child behavior and have provided both positive (Wantz & Recoe, 1984) and negative (Bauer, 1978, Clarkson, 1980) results. In view of the findings by this researcher, this study did not support the assumption that simultaneous parent-child group intervention would produce a positive change in children's behavior made by Wantz and Recoe, (1984), and Dinkmeyer and Dinkmeyer, (1982). This study did not assess parental attitudes of child behavior, which may or may not have supported the above hypothesis.

There are several possible explanations why this study may have failed to produce the expected results. The designated time for the study may have been too brief to produce changes in a population whose non-achievement and negative behaviors are firmly entrenched. Most Point Option students have not been successful in traditional school and come to Point Option as a last resort. A nine week program designed specifically to impact upon their feelings and attitudes may simply be too brief.

Another explanation may be the organization and atmosphere of Point Option specifically. Self concept measurements have been a part of the yearly administrative evaluation by the Newport News school system. These

measurements are taken when students enter the program and again at the end of the school year. Results have consistently shown an increase. DeSalvo (1982) found significant gains in achievement and self concept after one semester in an alternative high school where she was conducting research. Her study was to determine the effects of group counseling on the achievement and self concept of alternative high school students and she concluded that participation in an alternative program, with or without group counseling, had a positive effect. The students participating in this study had been enrolled in Point Option for at least one semester and it may be that self concept improvement was already underway.

With a school population of approximately 120 students, Point Option classes are frequently small and conducted in a small group format. While this structure was an advantage for this study, in that the PREP course would not appear novel, it may have been a disadvantage in that small group treatment may have had less impact than in a more traditional situation. Both treatment and control groups showed a mean increase in self concept, although not statistically significant, which may have been a result of being in an alternative setting alone or in combination with the PREP course. These findings do not support the work of

Talbert (1984) who used a peer counseling/Reality Therapy format with 390 high school students and found a significant improvement of the self concept of the participants, but it does support the lack of change in self concept found by Logan, Jepsen, and Eldridge (1977).

Underachievers have been shown to generally be more external in locus of control (Lefcourt, 1976) and examination of statistical results of this study, although not significant overall, showed the greatest change in this area. PREP group 2, when evaluated independently, did show a significant increase in movement toward internality (see Table 4.4) but not when combined with PREP group 1. Again, the organization of Point Option as well as the nature of the PREP program itself may possibly account for this phenomenon. The staff in general places a high priority on a democratic atmosphere and humanistic values, and stresses that each person is responsible for his/her behavior and that one's behavior has consequences. The PREP program also stresses these ideals and perhaps the combination partially explains the increase of group 2. In light of the research by Williams, Omigo, and Abrams (1984), this study does not support their findings of an increase in internality of children whose parents participated in the STEP parent education program.

It was hoped that parental participation in a parent education group would positively effect the perception of family atmosphere held by the students of these parents. Although there were some mean gains, results did not support that the treatment had any effect on this dependent variable. It has been generally accepted that parents of Point Option students are discouraged about their children's performance and attitudes and it was anticipated that participation in a group where alternative ideas and methods were presented might have provided the impetus necessary for experimenting with new ways of relating. Especially since their children were being presented the same philosophy, the likelihood of change seemed greater. Since parents also have attitudes and behaviors that are firmly entrenched, and change is difficult, it might be assumed that a longer period of time would be necessary for change to occur, if in fact change is possible. Evaluations of the parent group were very positive and most parents requested the group to continue.

Recommendations

As a result of the analysis of the results of this study, recommendations are suggested for further research which will hopefully overcome the limitations of this study

and provide additional information when working with this special population.

1. To compare alternative high school students with traditional high school students using the PREP program to ascertain a more accurate assessment of the effect of the alternative school experience would be beneficial.

2. Assessing students new to Point Option separately from those who have attended more than a semester would possibly aid in explaining the overall effect of the Point Option program on the results.

3. Assessing parental attitudes with the same measurement instrument as that used with their children would be helpful. It is possible that parental attitudes and behaviors may change regardless of change by their children.

4. To provide an ongoing support group for parents to reinforce their efforts would be beneficial.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

The PREP program is copywrited by the authors and may be obtained from American Guidance Service, Circle Pines, Minnesota 55014-1796. AGS was contacted by this researcher for approval to print the course outline. Approval was not granted.

APPENDIX B: VITA

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College of William and Mary
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APPENDIX C: VITA

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Experience:

Family Counselor
Alternatives, Inc.
Newport News, Virginia
1983-1986

Juvenile Probation Officer
City of Norfolk
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1979-1983

Certification:

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State Trainer - STEP programs

APPENDIX D: TENNESSEE SELF CONCEPT SCALE

The Tennessee Self Concept Scale is copywrited by its author, William H. Fitts, Ph.D. It can be obtained from Counselor Recordings and Tests, Box 6184, Acklen Station, Nashville, Tennessee 37212.

APPENDIX E: NOWICKI-STRICKLAND LOCUS OF CONTROL SCALE
FOR CHILDREN

Please circle Y for yes and N for no:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1. Do you believe that most problems will solve themselves if you just don't fool with them? | Y | N |
| 2. Do you believe that you can stop yourself from catching a cold? | Y | N |
| 3. Are some kids just born lucky? | Y | N |
| 4. Most of the time do you feel that getting good grades means a great deal to you? | Y | N |
| 5. Are you often blamed for things that just aren't your fault? | Y | N |
| 6. Do you believe that if somebody studies hard enough that he or she can pass any subject? | Y | N |
| 7. Do you feel that most of the time it doesn't pay to try hard because things never turn out right anyway? | Y | N |
| 8. Do you feel that if things start out well in the morning that it's going to be a good day no matter what you do? | Y | N |
| 9. Do you feel that most of the time parents listen to what their children have to say? | Y | N |
| 10. Do you believe that wishing can make good things happen? | Y | N |
| 11. When you get punished does it usually seem that it's for no good reason at all? | Y | N |
| 12. Most of the time do you find that it's hard to change a friend's mind (opinion)? | Y | N |

13. Do you think that cheering more than luck helps a team to win? Y N
14. Do you feel that it's nearly impossible to change your parent's mind about anything? Y N
15. Do you believe that your parents should allow you to make most of your own decisions? Y N
16. Do you feel that when you do something wrong there's very little you can do to make it right? Y N
17. Do you believe that most kids are just born good at sports? Y N
18. Are most of the other kids your age stronger than you are? Y N
19. Do you feel that one of the best ways to handle problems is just not to think about them? Y N
20. Do you feel that you have a lot of choice in deciding who your friends are? Y N
21. If you find a four leaf clover do you believe that it might bring you luck? Y N
22. Do you feel often that whether you do your homework has much to do with what kind of grades you get? Y N
23. Do you feel that when a kid your age decides to hit you, there's little you can do to stop him? Y N
24. Have you ever had a good luck charm? Y N
25. Do you believe that whether or not people like you depends on how you act? Y N
26. Will your parents usually help you if you ask them to? Y N
27. Have you felt that when people were mean to you it was usually for no reason at all? Y N
28. Most of the time, do you feel you can change what might happen tomorrow by what you do today? Y N
29. Do you feel that when bad things are going to happen they just are going to happen no matter what

- you do to try to stop them? Y N
30. Do you think that kids can get their own way if they just keep trying? Y N
31. Most of the time do you find it useless to try to get your own way at home? Y N
32. Do you feel that when good things happen they usually happen because of hard work? Y N
33. Do you feel that when someone your age wants to be your enemy there's little you can do to change matters. Y N
34. Do you feel that it's easy to get friends to do what you want them to? Y N
35. Do you feel that you usually have little to say about what you eat at home? Y N
36. Do you feel that when someone doesn't like you there's little you can do about it? Y N
37. Do you feel usually that it's almost useless to try in school because most other children are just plain smarter than you are? Y N
38. Are you the kind of person that believes planning ahead makes things turn out better? Y N
39. Most of the time, do you feel you have little to say about what your family decides to do? Y N
40. Do you think it's better to be smart than lucky? Y N

APPENDIX F: FAMILY ENVIRONMENT SCALE

The Family Environment Scale is copywrited by its authors, Rudolph H. Moos, Ph.D. and Bernice S. Moos. It may be obtained from Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 577 College Avenue, Palo Alto, California 94306.

APPENDIX G: STEP-TEEN PROGRAM

The STEP-Teen program is copywrited by its authors and may be obtained from American Guidance Service, Circle Pines, Minnesota 55014-1796.

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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECT OF AN ADELRIAN BASED GROUP COUNSELING/EDUCATION PROGRAM ON THE SELF CONCEPT, LOCUS OF CONTROL, AND FAMILY ENVIRONMENT OF ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Thelma W. Spencer

The College of William and Mary, August, 1986

Chairman: Kevin Geoffroy, Ph.D.

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of a structured Adlerian-based group education program (PREP) on the self concept, locus of control, and family relationships of alternative high school students, with and without parent participation in a parent education group.

The sample consisted of students at Point Option Project, an alternative high school in Newport News, Virginia, who requested to take the PREP course for elective credit ($n=34$). Students were assigned randomly to two treatment and one control group, with students whose parents were participating in the STEP-TEEN parent education program becoming PREP Group 1 and those students whose parents were not becoming PREP Group 2. Both treatment groups received identical information taught by the same instructor. The control group followed a regular class schedule. All classes met three times a week for approximately 50 minute periods. The Tennessee Self Concept Scale, the Nowicki-Strickland Locus of Control Scale for Children, and the Family Environment Scale were administered to all students as pretest-posttest measures. An analysis of covariance was conducted on the difference in pretest and posttest scores using the pretest score as the covariate.

The major findings of this study were:

1. Students in both treatment groups did not significantly ($p < .05$) improve their Total Positive score on the Tennessee Self Concept Scale.
2. No significant differences ($P < .05$) were found between the experimental and control groups on movement toward internality.
3. No significant differences ($p < .05$) were found in perceptions of family environment as a result of participation in the PREP program.